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Library 715
Budget Narrative
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As an independent school our budget process much different than the one described in *The Library Media Manager*. Our school functions as an independent entity which simplifies the process greatly. There is a small group of individuals that deal with the budget. Basically the heads of departments interface with the Head of School and the Business Manager with respect to budget. Each department head writes a budget each year, then meets with the Business Manager and Head of School to go over the budget. At that time, the Business Manager and Head of School pose any questions regarding the proposed budget for that department. For the most part, the library budget has remained fairly constant. On several occasions I've requested additional funding for specific projects. For these special projects I've written proposals detailing the need for the additional funding. One such example is the updating of our nonfiction collection. About two years ago, I started the process. I ran reports which broke down the nonfiction collection by Dewey range. I "educated" the Head of School and Business Manager regarding the need for currency in our nonfiction collection. We developed a three year plan to update the collection in stages. Additional monies were set aside for this specific purpose.

St. Matthew's situation is unique due to demographics. Many of our parents are affluent. They can afford to pay a steep tuition and make donations to the school through annual giving campaigns and fundraisers. Consequently, we are blessed to have many resources. I've never had a proposal denied for equipment or books. If I can show the educational value of the request, then I've been able to acquire the needed resources. Another positive in our favor is that our Head of School is a huge advocate of the library. He is an unusual man; he's well-read and understands the value associated with instilling a love of reading in our students. He also understands the need for our students to be informationally literate. It certainly doesn't hurt to have the Head of School on our side. We are also fortunate to have a very sharp Business Manager. He sends us monthly Excel spreadsheets updating our purchases to date so we know just where we stand. He does whatever he can to help us find the best deal for considered purchases. For example, recently we purchased Flip cameras for check out in the library. Our Business Manager found us an amazing deal online.

Question # 11 on the check list got me thinking. It talks about coordinating purchases with other schools/districts in order to get discounts. Due to the fact that we're an independent school, we've never explored that option. However, I started wondering if we could get some sort of "group" discount on subscriptions to databases, etc if several independent schools bought the same subscriptions. I have a feeling that many of us subscribe to similar databases. Eg. World Book Online or eLibrary through Proquest. It's an option I'm going to explore.